

Holding the Silence

The Daily Office Advent 2023

Join the Holding the Silence live stream
Wednesday-Friday at 12noon, or watch the
videos on our [YouTube](#) channel at any time.

Christ's coming into the world
is a mystery
surrounded by silence.

We can never fathom it
or explain it by scientific analysis.

But we can
draw near
and wonder
and adore,
and offer our lives
because of that coming.

A candle may be lit at the start of the prayer.

PREPARATION

O Lord, open our lips
and our mouths shall proclaim your praise.

Reveal among us the light of your presence
You who are common to us all.

Morning:

In your tender compassion, O God,
the dawn from on high is breaking
upon us to dispel the lingering
shadows of night. As we look for your
coming among us this day, open our
hearts to behold your presence and
strengthen our hands to do your will,
that the world may rejoice and give
you praise.
Amen.

Noon:

Calm us to wait for the gift of Christ.
Cleanse us to prepare for the gift of
Christ. Teach us to contemplate the
wonder of Christ. Anoint us to bear
the life of Christ.
Amen.

Evening:

O unknown God, whose presence is
announced not among the impressive
but in obscurity: come, overshadow us
now, and speak to our hidden places:
that, entering your darkness with joy,
we may choose to co-operate with you,
through Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Night:

May we be out of our depth - as the
depths of the night sky contain but
cannot explain God's mystery. May we
lose count - as an infinity of stars is
dazed and amazed by God's presence.
May we be in the dark - as the moon is
eclipsed, but held safe, with all that is,
in the palm of God's hand. May we be
lost for words - as the Word is spoken,
in the silence of the night, in the beauty
of God's creation.
Amen.

CANTICLE

This or another psalm or canticle is said.

The wilderness and dry land shall rejoice,
the desert shall blossom and burst into song.
They shall see the glory of God, the majesty of
our God.

Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then shall the lame leap like a hart,
and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert; the ransomed of
God shall return with singing, with everlasting
joy upon their heads. Joy and gladness shall
be theirs, and sorrow and sighing shall flee
away.

Glory to God, Source of all Being,
Eternal Word and Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning,
is now and shall be forever.
Amen.

INTRODUCTION TO READINGS

Christ, Light of the world, meet us in our place
of darkness.
Christ, Light of the world, meet us in our place
of longing.
Christ, Light of the world, meet us in our place
of working.

Christ, Light of the world, meet us in our place of need.

Lead us through the narrow gate of not knowing, that we may listen and obey, and come to a place of silence and stillness, of true conversation and wisdom.

READINGS

(See Collects and Readings leaflet)

SILENCE

Morning:

As the new day dawns we rejoice in the first glimmers of light which remind us of your coming, O Christ. We give thanks that your light has overcome all our darkness; may we share in the mystery of your presence in the world, and be always ready to live each day for you.

Amen.

Noon:

From rushing round to stillness, O God, we come. From being pulled in all directions to the simplicity of this moment, O God, we come. Help us to realign our will with your will and our spirits with your Spirit as we reach out to you in the silence.

Amen.

Evening:

Come, O Holy One; lift up your light among us. May we ever be a true reflection of the gospel and lead the Church into an honest encounter with itself and the world it claims to serve.

Amen.

Night:

God of shadows and echoes, darkness and light, help us to be still in our dark moments, our waiting times, our uncertainties. And when morning comes, show us how to greet the dawn without trying to make sense of the amazing light.

Amen.

PRAYERS

As the community of St James's Piccadilly, apart and part of the whole, in isolation and in communion, near and far, together we pray . .

COLLECT

(See Collects and Readings leaflet)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven
hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.

Amen.

THE CONCLUSION

When the Christ comes,
may we be found watching and waiting.
Amen.

Let us bless the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Material from: Angela Ashwin, Common Worship, The Iona Community, Jim Cotter, Edwina Gateley, Peter Millar, Ann Lewin, Janet Morley, Joy Mead, Jan Sutch Pickard, John Pritchard, Dorothy McRae-McMahon, The New Zealand Prayer Book, The St Hilda Community, Ray Simpson

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